

Advice To The Students Of Knowledge

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Verily the praise is for Allaah; we praise Him, seek His Assistance, and seek His Forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Him from the evil of our own selves and the bad results of our actions. Whomever Allaah guides, there is no one to lead him astray, and whomever is lead astray, there is no guide for him. I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah, who is alone without partners, and I testify that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger. To proceed:

I ask Allaah, Glorified and Exalted, to accept our righteous deeds, to place (the reward for) this sitting on our Scale of good deeds, and to keep every evil and disliked thing away from us.

In this sitting, in shaa' Allaah, I would like to advise myself and my brothers, those in front of me now, as well as those listening by way of telephone link - and this is one of Allaah's blessings - with a few points of advice.

Surely the information available regarding seeking knowledge is abundant, about the virtues of knowledge, its status, the position of its possessors, and the nation's need for it. So much so that there is no need for me to go over it once more.

Rather I would like to simply put forth some points of advice to the students of knowledge. For verily, the students of knowledge are the elite members of this nation, the great hope that we look forward to, in shaa' Allaah. They are the ones we expect Allaah to use to revive the distinguishing characteristics of this Religion, spreading good virtues by them, and using them to conquer wickedness. So this part of our nation deserves more of our concern, careful watch, and guidance than any other group, since they benefit a great number of people. As opposed to others, their benefits are not restricted to themselves; rather they extend to the whole nation, those present in our time and those yet to come.

Remaining Close to the Scholars:

So I say, dear brothers, may Allaah bless you all, take special care to remain close to the people of knowledge. For taking matters to the people of knowledge surely keeps one away from fitnah. It secures one from going astray and protects one from falling into error. No people ever went astray while continually consulting the people of knowledge. How could they go astray obeying Allaah's Order and His Guidance? Allaah says:

"So ask the people of knowledge when you do not know."

[Surah Al-Anbiyaa: 7]

So whoever asks the people of knowledge and consults them, then he has been granted success, as he has fulfilled what has been asked of him. Whoever carries out what Allaah has made obligatory on him, then Allaah does not go back on His Promises:

"And whoever has taqwaa of Allaah, then He gives him ease in his affair."

[Surah At-Talaaq: 4]

The one who returns to the people of knowledge, going to them in all affairs, in both the apparent and the confusing issues, is granted success, in shaa' Allaah. So from this important advice of returning to the people of knowledge is that taking knowledge is done by way of the akaabir (senior scholars), and knowledge is not taken from the asaaghir.[1]¹

The asaaghir, as some scholars have explained, are the people of innovation, even if their reputation has been magnified to some people. The people of innovation are lowly and wicked, even if they possess some prestige with some of the people, those who do not even know the straight path.

Other scholars explained the asaaghir to be those new to seeking knowledge, those who started seeking knowledge but never became strong in the affair and never attained the proper fundamentals. Knowledge is not taken from these kinds of people, since they themselves were not able to master the affair they began. So how can they help others become to master it?!

In every situation, returning to the people of knowledge, and taking from them, protects one from fitnah. So be warned about the wicked asaaghir, the people of desires and straying, the people who make statements that contradict Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah! (Be warned about) the people who try to divide and split the ranks of those who follow the truth!

All of this is closely related to my advice about sticking closely to the people of knowledge, since remaining close to them prevents one from falling into these kinds of errors. For keeping distant from the people of knowledge leads one to fall into these affairs, and with Allaah is the refuge.

Manners in Seeking Knowledge:

It is a must for us to learn the proper manners needed to seek knowledge. We must not seek knowledge to look down on the people. We must not seek knowledge to draw attention to ourselves. We must not seek knowledge to argue with the foolish people, or to gain positions over them. We must not seek knowledge to argue with the scholars.

We must only seek knowledge for Allaah, and we must be humble. For verily if a man has been granted some knowledge, then it is binding on him to make that knowledge a way for him to become humble. As for the one who is granted knowledge, but he does not become humble, then this is a very bad sign. Right now, every one of us is able to interrogate himself, saying, "How well are you acting according to what you know? How is your humility, your character, and your humbleness?"

Some students, when given knowledge by Allaah, and He grants them an abundance of it, deal proudly with their brothers, look down on them, and view themselves as being far above them and much greater than them. This kind of man has not received any beneficial knowledge, since he is being harmed by what

¹ **Translator's Note:** Shaykh Abul-Hasan, in using the word asaaghir, seems to be alluding to a hadeeth of the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam), **"Verily from the signs of the Hour is that knowledge will be sought from the asaaghir."** In *Basaa'iru Thawish-Sharaf*, Shaykh Saleem Al-Hilaalee calls it saheeh and traces it to Ibn Mubaarak's *Az-Zuhd* (p.61), Al-Laalakaa'ee's *Sharh Usool I'tiqaad Ahlis-Sunnati wal-Jamaa'ah* (p.102), and Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdaadee's *Al-Jaami' li-Akhlaaqir-Raawee wa Adaabis-Saami'* (v.1, p.137). The forthcoming explanations are for the word asaaghir as found in the hadeeth, and Allaah knows best.

he knows. His knowledge, and with Allaah is the refuge, is causing his destruction.

Ayyoob As-Sakhtiyaanee, as well as 'Abdullaah Ibn Mubaarak, may Allaah have mercy on them, used to say to their companions, "You people are in need of learning a little bit of manners more than you need to learn a lot of knowledge." So good manners to a student of knowledge are like the leaves of a tree that shield and protect him. Any student who is not well-mannered, nor is he humble with his brothers, nor have favourable behaviour, how can he be considered a true student of knowledge?! He is running the people away from knowledge! Verily he is preventing people from following the Religion, from Allaah's Path! How many call to Allaah's Way but prevent the people from following it?! And how many are quick to remind the people about Allaah but are heedless themselves about their own reminders?! We ask Allaah to pardon and excuse us.

So the student of knowledge must be upon righteous character. He must behave well with his teacher. He must have good manners with his companions and brothers, and with those younger than him. He must behave well with his elders and those over him in authority. He must have good manners with those who assist him and do favours for him; he must have good manners with the young and old alike. He must fulfil the rights that Allaah gave all those around him. So look to a man's knowledge, if you see him studying this year upon good moral character, and then two years later you find him with much better character, know that his knowledge is affecting him, he is benefiting from it. Whoever benefits from his knowledge, Allaah will benefit the people by him. And if you see the opposite in someone, then know that he is on the brink of destruction, unless, from Allaah's Mercy, He blesses him to not be one of these ruined people. Allaah says:

"Verily the ones who (truly) fear Allaah from among His Servants are the scholars." [Surah Faatir: 28]

Knowledge cultivates humility and humbleness. Knowledge grants one the ability to fight desires and gain control over one's self and culture it. This is how our Salaf were! They used to be very concerned with their own selves and their relationship with Allaah.

The Thikr (Remembrance) of Allaah:

My advice to the students of knowledge also includes that they must remember Allaah. From the greatest of all mistakes, dear brothers, is that the students heedlessly abandon the remembrance of Allaah and the acts of obedience that draw would them closer to Him.

Some students may think that as they seek knowledge they do not need to pray any of the optional prayers, nor do they need to fast optional days. They may feel that they are not in need of these kinds of deeds, even though the Salaf used to be the most concerned of the people about them. And despite this, they may say, "I follow the manhaj of the Salaf!" The way of the Salaf involves statements and actions, not simply the refutation of the people of innovation. This was just one door, from the many great doors of good that the Salaf opened for this nation.

Just as the Salaf used to refute innovators, they used to have great moments between them and Allaah, Mighty and Majestic. They used to worship Allaah privately. They used to have sittings wherein they would take account of

themselves, taking charge of their desires. If we are going to follow the path of the Salaf, we should love to follow their way in all affairs, open and private. The one who excels in his search for knowledge, but abandons the optional prayers, and loses out here and there, he can not truly be considered a student of knowledge, even though he has knowledge and is able to quote references from Alfiyyah and other books.

Imaam Ath-Thahabee, when he mentioned the biography of Mis'ar ibn Kidaam Al-Hilaalee, he talked about his worship, and that he was not only exemplary in his worship, but in his studies of hadeeth as well a scholar of hadeeth and, at the same time, an outstanding worshipper! He saw the people expelling their efforts seeking strange hadeeths and rare additions to certain narrations that they used to consider points of benefit, some of them dha'eef, some munkar, some saheeh, and the likes. He saw that the people used to busy themselves for long periods of time with these things, so he said, "Verily this hadeeth has diverted you from the remembrance of Allaah and from prayer. So will you not stop this now?" Mis'ar used to say this, as Al-Khateeb reported, as well as Ath-Thahabi. When Ath-Thahabi mentioned it, he explained it saying, "Whoever seeks knowledge just for the thrill of it, just because he is driven to learn, not for a religious reason, then we fear for him. And whoever seeks knowledge and abandons optional forms of worship, he is lazy and despicable. He is lazy and despicable." Then he mentioned that when the Salaf used to seek knowledge, they used to give their optional deeds their proper share of attention.

It is binding on the student of knowledge that he concerns himself with the thikr of Allaah, those phrases of remembrance for the morning and the evening, and the thikr that follows the five daily prayers. So many of the students do not recite the phrases "subhaan allaah" the prescribed 33 times, nor "alhamdu lillaah," nor "allaahu akbar," nor the likes, as if that is something for the common people only!

Too many students of knowledge, when you see them coming to the prayer, you find them in the last rows. The common people are lined up in the first row, and they are in the last one. It is as if trying to get in the first rows, or coming early to Jumu'ah prayer, these are things for common people, not for us - we are special people!

This is not correct, dear brothers! These are things that the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) guided all the people to. And the Companions were the most pious of the people after the Messenger (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), and they used to take care to consistently do these things. And the Companions were the most knowledgeable people of this nation after its Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), and they used to guard over their performance of these things. The Athkaar (phrases of Allaah's remembrance) have a great effect on the cultivation of the heart. They are our provisions, dear brothers, our provisions for the journey. If a man remembers Allaah, Mighty and Majestic, and pays attention to his consistent phrases of remembrance, then he has taken his provisions, that which sees him through his journey to Allaah, Mighty and Majestic. Provisions that help him get past all the obstacles in this worldly life, the many problems that will keep him busy. Provisions that will help him carry his heavy load!

When Shaykh Al-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allaah have Mercy on him, used to pray Fajr, he would sit making thikr until the sun rose. He used to say, "This is my morning meal, if I don't do this, I would lose my strength," or something to the likes of this. He used to actually nourish himself with thikr!

So the man who misses out, not remembering Allaah, the foolish people will get bold with him! If you miss out on these athkaar, not sticking to them consistently, the people will boldly go after you this one insults you, that one is talking about you, this one refutes you, that one takes a stab at you, etc, with truthful things or with falsehoods!

Abandoning thikr causes a man to exit his fortress. Thikr is a mighty fortress, whoever enters it will be safeguarded. Abandoning thikr, or being heedless about it, makes a man susceptible to the attacks of human devils, as well as those from the Jinn.

As students of knowledge, how many times in our lives have we faced grief and pain? How many times have we been attacked, talked about, slandered, and insulted even by those who ascribe themselves to the Sunnah!? Those biased partisans who ascribe themselves to the Sunnah that cause division to this nation, busying it with these affairs, and with Allaah is the refuge - they are the first ones who will talk about you!

How bad is it when you find the closest people to you are the ones talking about you?! No doubt this is a great burden on the soul, as it has been said, "The oppression of the close relatives is more severe and more difficult to deal with within one's soul than the striking of the enemy's sword." This is such a difficult blow to the soul! So then what about those not so close to you?!

The Daa'iyah, the one who calls to Allaah's Way, and this is to be expected when one ascribes himself to the Sunnah, is being refuted by this one, and that one is talking about him, and some are distorting his reputation, this one is setting people against him, and there are people trying to kill him or jail him, and some are trying to make his life difficult - all of these things happen. So you will not be able to become strong in the midst of this surging, restless ocean and its tidal waves of fitnah, except with the thikr of Allaah.

The remembrance of Allaah is security and a mighty fortress for you. So be warned! Be warned about failing to take advantage of this fortress and thus exiting from it, making yourself vulnerable to the devils, or simply opening your door and your enemies from the human devils and those from the Jinn enter upon you, disturbing and frustrating you tremendously, and with Allaah is the refuge!

So I advise all the students of knowledge, as well as all those who love the Sunnah, to consistently recite the phrases of Allaah's remembrance that come to us by way of the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), in their correct forms, at their correct times, repeating them the correct number of times, at the occasions that the Sunnah specified, so that we may become, with Allaah's Permission, from:

"And those who remember Allaah much." [Surah Al-Ahzaab: 35]

For when Allaah, Glorified and Exalted, ordered us to make thikr, He did not merely say, "Remember Allaah," rather He said:

"Remember Allaah with a great amount of remembrance!"

[Surah Al-Ahzaab: 41]

So a man may make thikr, but he may not necessarily be from: **"Those who remember Allaah much."** He said: **"Remember Allaah with a great amount of remembrance!"**

And truly Allaah made thikr one of the main reasons for a person's stability, as He says:

"O you who believe! When you meet a group (of the enemy), then be firm and remember Allaah with a great amount of remembrance so that you might be successful." [Surah Al-Anfaal: 45]

The remembrance of Allaah in times of fear, when you prepare to face the enemy and fight their strong ones, is a factor that leads to victory.

So dear brothers, do not look at thikr as the common people do, as if it is a simple task of counting some words of praise on their fingers and then they are finished with it. No, the remembrance of Allaah is with the heart, as you remember Allaah in the whole of your heart, saying words that the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) said and thinking about their meanings, especially when these small words carry great and numerous meanings.

I mean to say that you should remember Allaah with these concise but meaningful phrases, those that are established on the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), and that you should not bring some phrases from your own self, despite the fact that it is permissible to do that. Rather the phrases used by the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) are more concise with deeper meanings, the first and the last of them have a great benefit. So guard closely your adherence to the athkaar of the morning so that you will be in the protection of Allaah until the nightfall, and then consistently make the athkaar of the evening so that you will be in the protection of Allaah until the morning.

Guard closely over your supplications to Allaah, those that Allaah will remove your distresses because of them. The Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) told us about the farewell advice of the Prophet Nooh ('alayhis-salaam) to his son. Nooh said, "I order you with two things and I forbid you from two things. I order you with laa ilaaha ill-Allaah and subhaan allaahi wa bihamdihi (glorified is Allaah and to Him is the praise) by way of it the entire creation is provided for." ²

So saying subhaan allaahi wa bihamdihi causes one to be provided for. So let the poverty-stricken, troubled man increase his use of this phrase, subhaan allaahi wa bihamdihi, let him increase his tasbeeh. Subhaan allaahi wa bihamdihi - by way of it, the entire creation is provided for! Allaah says:

"There is nothing that exists except that it glorifies and praises Allaah."
[Surah Al-Israa': 44]

So this tasbeeh, brothers, all of the creation is making it. So please recite this phrase frequently and consistently, subhaan allaahi wa bihamdihi.

And also "subhaan allaahi wa bihamdihi 'adada khalqihi wa ridhaa nafsihi" and all the athkaar of the morning, dear brothers, are a great bounty, the doors to much good!

The conditions of time we live in have overtaken us to the point where our minds often only think about tangible, material things! Where is the spirituality, the use of the hearts, the relying on Allaah the Mighty and Majestic?! Where are those who understand and actualize thikr and du'aa'?! Du'aa' is a great avenue to seek after what you want.

² **Translator's Note:** The two things the Prophet Nooh prohibited his son from was: shirk and pride. The hadeeth is found in the Musnad of Imaam Ahmad.

How well are we utilizing it? How many diseases strike the people, and they run here and there, frantically seeking the cure? Perhaps someone may seek medical treatment for years, but has he sat just one time allowing his heart to flee to Allaah, making a firm request of Allaah that He heals this sickness?! Has he sat one time and emptied the affairs from his heart and soul, raising his hands to Allaah, Mighty and Majestic?!

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have Mercy on him, mentioned that if a man calls on Allaah the Mighty and Majestic at the times when his supplication is likely to be answered according to the Sunnah, facing the qiblah, raising his hands with humility, beginning by praising Allaah and sending salutations on the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), thinking well of Allaah and being persistent in his request, then rarely would his supplication go unanswered. I say that we have great doors in front of us, doors that lead to plenty of benefits.

It has occurred that many people today understand that the way of the Salaf is not to talk about these kinds of affairs, nor busy one's self with these kinds of issues. That they only talk about "so-and-so is this and so-and-so is that," and this is not correct! The call to the way of the Salaf includes discussions about the spirituality of the heart! It includes discussions about healing the heart, and the things that harm the heart.

Read the works of Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have Mercy on him! Read the works of Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allaah have Mercy on him! Read the Speech of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic! Read the narrations of the Messenger (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) about how he used to supplicate to Allaah; these narrations carry tremendous meanings, meanings that will stir up the heart! If people would only read these supplications with a live heart, with an attentive heart, not with an absent, heedless, unmindful heart, and with Allaah is the refuge!

It could be that a person mentions Allaah in such a way that he falls into disobedience with this thikr, and with Allaah is the refuge! It has been narrated that one of the rulers was sitting with another man. Some people came and said, "So-and-so has said such-and-such!" So a man from those present stood up and said to the ruler, "Subhaan Allaah! O subhaan Allaah, he said that?!" His saying subhaan Allaah in this fashion was only to incite the ruler's anger against that man. So someone from those present said, "I never knew that Subhaan Allaah could be used to disobey Allaah until now!"

Do you see how the phrase subhaan Allaah was used to disobey Allaah? He only wanted to incite the ruler to try and get revenge against the one who said the statement. "O subhaan Allaah, he said that?!" He did not intend thikr by it. He did not intend to remember Allaah with it, nor to glorify Allaah the Mighty and Majestic by it. He only intended mischievous slander and provocation by it, hoping to provoke the ruler against that man.

So thikr, dear brothers, must be intended for Allaah the Mighty and Majestic. And the students of knowledge must be the foremost people who remember Allaah. There were men from the Salaf, whenever they were seen, Allaah would be mentioned, wherever they were seen! Wherever they were seen! That has been reported about 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Abee Haatim; when he was seen, Allaah would be remembered. Ayyoob was also described this way, and Ibn Seereen as well, and Hammaad ibn Salamah. Simply by looking at them, Allaah would be remembered. One of them was sought after to seek rain, another was sought after to end calamities. The people used to understand that by their mere

presence, Allaah would remove their calamities! They used to believe that Allaah would send down rain because of their presence amongst them.

So, brothers, where are the people of hadeeth like this?! Imaam Ath-Thahabee said, "I am not able to see them, except in the books or in their graves!" And that was in the time of Ath-Thahabee! He said, "I am not able to see them, except in the books or in their graves!" We ask Allaah to excuse us and to grant us security. Where are the people of hadeeth like this?!

The people of hadeeth were the ones who, due to their presence, Allaah removed trials from the places they went, as Ibraaheem ibn Adham said. Allaah had removed calamities from the places they travelled to because of their journey there!

The people of hadeeth are the blessed possessors of virtues on this earth, after Allaah Glorified and Exalted. The people of hadeeth are those who memorized and preserved the Religion and conveyed it to the people. For this, they journeyed far, and were seen as strangers, and because of this they were harmed. And every businessman stands behind his business. Every king stands behind his kingdom. And every owner of some worldly thing stands behind his piece of the dunyaa. And every follower of desires stands behind his cravings. As for the people of hadeeth, they were the ones who travelled through the Earth from the East to the West, gathering the Religion from the chests of men, organizing chapters and arranging them, authoring books, and propagating the Religion amongst the people. And from the characteristics of the people of hadeeth they were the people of thikr. They used to remember Allaah much. They were also the people of hard work and perseverance (which leads us to the next piece of advice)...

Perseverance:

I advise my brothers to be people of hard work and perseverance, doing good deeds and acts of obedience. It is not for a man to do some act of obedience, and then allow it to dwindle away and leave it, no! If Allaah makes a way for you to perform an act of obedience, then stick to it! If you have been granted to ability to pray at night, then do not abandon it! If you are able to fast, then do not abandon it! If you were able to perform an act of worship, then do not leave it off!

"For verily the most beloved of deeds to Allaah are those performed consistently, even if they are few." ³

Some people become active, and soon after weaken until they become inactive. They are active for a month and then stagnant for years! The most beloved deeds to Allaah are the consistent ones, even if they are few.

Patience has, as the scholars say, three main categories: Patience upon obedience, patience against disobedience, and patience through trials. Patience upon obedience means to continue and be consistent in your good deeds, and that you do not do something and then leave it off. It means that you do not persist with a good action and then abandon it. Patience in against disobedience means that you restrain yourself from falling into acts of disobedience, and patience though trials needs no explanation.

³ **Translator's Note:** As the Prophet said in a hadeeth found in Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, and others, on the authority of 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her.

The most difficult of these categories is patience upon obedience; indeed the most difficult of them is patience upon obedience. For example, a man may pray Dhuhaa prayer for a week and then abandon it for months. A man may become consistent with certain athkaar or he dedicates a certain time consistently to private worship, and then he becomes busy and no longer does it.

My advice to the students of knowledge is that, if they become acquainted with a beneficial action, they must stick to it, guard their performance of it, and continue with it. For verily this is a great indication for a believer and a good sign for him. A great sign for the believer is that he increases in something good every day, every day he increases in goodness.

The Real Fiqh:

I advise the student of knowledge to look to the kinds of gatherings that increase him in his Eemaan. He must sit in the gatherings that cause his faith to increase. And the gatherings that decrease his faith, he must stay away from them. Be warned about sitting in gatherings that cause your faith to diminish! Be warned about your companionship with a man who causes a decline in your faith!

Look to the meaning of fiqh, my brothers! This is the real fiqh! The faqeeh is the one who is aware of the reasons for the increases and decreases of his faith. This is the real faqeeh! The faqeeh is not the one who only knows the points of differing in certain issues, and that this person said this and that one said that, and the correct opinion is such-and-such. This one is the faqeeh regarding the orders of Allaah. But if he does not combine this with an understanding of the affairs of the heart, then he is ignorant about Allaah, but knowledgeable regarding the orders of Allaah.

The Jews used to have knowledge, but it was merely information to them. Meanwhile they used to be ignorant about Allaah the Mighty and Majestic. They were bold in their dealings with Allaah, inventing lies against Him. They used to accuse Allaah, Glorified and Exalted, of having ugly characteristics, saying that His Hand is tied up, or that He is poor and they are wealthy. They used to make these horrible statements about Allaah while they had knowledge of Him! They were possessors of knowledge and awareness (despite these statements)!

So the student of knowledge must keep close watch over this. He must concern himself with this moral excellence and become from the people of righteousness, those firmly established upon good, those who stop at the limits of Allaah, Glorified and Exalted. Do not transgress Allaah's limits - you are students of knowledge, dear brothers! You are the youth of today and the elders of tomorrow. Today you are listening and tomorrow the people are listening to you, yes today you are listening and tomorrow you will be listened to!

So the student of knowledge, his task is an extensive one, his phase is lengthy. And no one will pass through it successfully except those who bear through the entire length of the phase, without stumbling. Do not think that you are on the right path even if Allaah willed that you study for 50 years and you are in the 49th year. You may slip in the 50th year and then the first 49 years will be no benefit for you! I mean to say that the 49 years did not preserve your reputation. And I do not mean to say that your deeds will be lost with Allaah. And the student's personal history is widely circulated, as if it is printed on his forehead, and it cannot be hidden from view. Every time he falls into error, a black dot is placed in his personal history, one that can hardly be forgotten. So, no doubt, the student of knowledge guards carefully over this issue. He must be careful and stick closely to right guidance and judge properly in his affairs.

For verily among the supplications the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) used to make was: **"Allaahumma Innee As-Alukal-Hudaa was-Sadaad!"** ⁴

So a man should ask Allaah for guidance, correctness, direction, and success in his affairs.

Wisdom, Understanding, and Lenience:

The students of knowledge and all those who love the Sunnah are also advised to have wisdom, to carry out their affairs with wisdom. They should go about their affairs with deliberateness and carefulness, and they should have leniency, may Allaah bless you all, in their call to Allaah the Mighty and Majestic. Likewise they must look to the long-term results of their affairs, the benefits and harms that may occur. They must not simply act according to the present situation in a way that leads ultimately to the demise of the da'wah, or its isolation or restriction. We ask Allaah to be excused and pardoned.

So the successful student of knowledge is the one who is wise in his call, kind and merciful to Allaah's Creation, knowledgeable about the Truth, and with all of that, lenient and nice with the people. For verily the call of Ahlus-Sunnah, as Shaykh Al-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned, is the call to the Truth, the invitation to the Truth based on knowledge and mercy to the creation.

So if a man has knowledge of the Truth, but he is harsh and rough with the people, then he is not fulfilling what Allaah made obligatory on him! It would be better for him to focus on working on himself and establishing his own self, and not to become a caller to Allaah. That is because Allaah, Glorified and Exalted, warned us against that. He warned His own Prophet against that!

"If you had been severe and hard-hearted, they would have fled from you." [Surah Aali 'Imraan:159]

And he was the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam)! So be warned about being severe and harsh-hearted! Be warned about being rough and difficult with your brothers! So do not add to the difficulties of this age that your brothers are already facing! Do not add your own set of difficulties, adding calamity after calamity upon what they are already facing in this time! Be compassionate with your brothers, taking them by their hands, correcting and guiding them! Be patient with them, and make excuses for them! They are the ones being pressured, day and night, by the people of falsehood and desires, due to their adherence to the Sunnah of the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam)! So then it is binding on you to be patient with them, to correct them, bearing their companionship, taking them by their hands toward Allaah, Glorified and Exalted!

The student of knowledge who has no wisdom causes more harm than benefit, so it is not expected for him to become an imaam for the Muslims, nor one that his brothers refer to, if he is not a man having wisdom. So having said this, it is binding on the student to be wise, intellectual, and aware. The Salaf used to say about a man who is wise and intelligent that his intellect is greater than his knowledge. But if a man is reckless and feeble-minded, displaying rashness and indiscretion, then they would say about him that his knowledge was greater than his intellect. He may have knowledge, but his intellect or understanding is limited.

⁴ Translator's Note: Which means: **"O Allaah, Verily I ask you for guidance and correctness!"** 'Alee reported it, and it is found in Saheeh Muslim in the Chapter of Ath-Thikru wad-Du'aa'.

So our affair, dear brother, is not simply gathering knowledge of the various sciences of the Religion, rather it is coupling this knowledge with understanding. Understanding and leniency must accompany knowledge, so that Allaah, Glorified and Exalted, will benefit you by it, and then benefit others by you.

These are the points of advice that I wanted to advise myself with, as well as my brothers, those present as well as those listening in.

I ask Allaah to grant me, and all of you, keys to goodness and shields against evil, and to save us all from the trials of evil sayings and actions. May Allaah raise the rank of our Prophet Muhammad, and that of his family and companions, and may He grant them security.